



St. Mary's Catholic
Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

To be reviewed September 2025

September 2024

Statement of Intent

As a Catholic School, our mission statement is: To love, value and respect each other within the Catholic family; to nurture every individual's talents and skills, as Jesus taught us.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying of any kind does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour with the intention of hurting another person and occurs over a period of time. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and makes them feel powerless.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, by having nasty stories told about them; being left out, ignored or excluded from groups, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Religious – taunts about faith and beliefs.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber - All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse, social media, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phones or other electronic devices.

St Mary's recognises that although anyone can be bullied for almost any reason or difference, some children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others. Research has identified various different types of bullying experienced by particular vulnerable groups of children. These include:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities
- Bullying related to being of higher ability
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual or transphobic bullying.
- Derogatory language – relating to race, religion, culture, special educational needs, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, appearance, health conditions, family/home circumstances (including same sex partnerships)

At St Mary's, we consider bullying to be an action which is often and deliberately repeated.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying and everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools therefore have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- At St Mary's, we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to, from or into school
- doesn't want to travel on the school bus
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- shows signs of school performance being affected
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

What children can do

- understand what bullying is and the forms it can take.
- understand how bullying affects other children.
- never bully others or get drawn into bullying other children.
- prevent bullying by informing teachers or other adults in charge.

What parents/carers can do

- have the expectation that their children will feel happy and secure in school and that the school provides a safe and secure environment for their children to learn in.
- raise any concerns with staff at St Mary's Catholic Primary School.
- expect all complaints of bullying to be investigated and the outcome reported to the parent/carer(s) who raise the concern.

What St Mary's will do

- constantly monitor behaviour to prevent potential bullying incidents from developing.
- Teach children about the effects of bullying on children and about dealing with bullying. This will be done through RE, RSHE, Circle Time and assemblies.
- Deal seriously with all concerns raised by children and parents/carers.
- Hold the expectation that all bullying behaviour is unacceptable and use appropriate sanctions.
- Ensure that the anti-bullying policy is valid for children, staff and parents.

Procedure

1. Report bullying incidents to staff.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
3. In serious cases parents will be informed and they will be asked to come to school to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. A report will be made to parents/carers of all those involved. This will be kept on file.
7. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other sanctions may be used.
2. In serious cases, temporary or even permanent exclusion will be considered
3. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
4. After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use KIDSCAPE methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays (or using KIDSCAPE role-plays)
- holding discussions about bullying and why it matters

We also follow advice from the Anti-bullying Alliance: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>